

ArtWorks

for Virginia School Children

Impact of Virginia Artists and Arts Organizations on Education

Knowledge of the arts is part of a well-rounded education that benefits every child, whether the child grows up to be a scientist, an artist, or a basketball player. In addition, the arts provide effective learning opportunities that yield

increased academic performance, reduced absenteeism, and better skill-building. Arts education builds skills in problem-solving, in teamwork, and in self-discipline.

Simple exposure to the arts is not enough.

The schools already teach the vocabularies and ideas of good writing through the study of great literature.

Other branches of the arts communicate in images, sounds, and movements. The schools need to teach the vocabularies of these images, sounds, and movements, as well as of words, in order to build the strong communication skills needed in the 21st century.

American Presidents throughout history have spoken of the value of study of the arts. John Adams stated that his grandchildren should have “a right to study painting, poetry, music, and architecture.” President Ronald Reagan urged the country to “resolve that our schools will teach our children the same respect and appreciation for the arts and humanities that the Founders had.”



Benefits of a Good Arts Education

Studies have found that children who study the arts are:

- **four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement**
- **elected to class office within their schools three times as often**
- **four times more likely to participate in a math and science fair**
- **three times more likely to win an award for school attendance.**

A Columbia University study found that students with at least three years of in-school arts instruction had index scores averaging 20 points higher than their peers on measures of creative thinking, fluency, originality, and resistance to closure.



Arts Education Enhances Workforce Readiness

(from a report of the National Governors Association)

The arts are one tool for enhancing workforce readiness. A paper prepared by the National Governors Association states that “knowledge has supplanted labor-intensive careers as the preferred path to economic growth and stability. Human capital has become the primary determinant of a region’s economic vitality. Today’s challenging workplace demands academic skills as well as intangible assets such as flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and interpersonal skills. Programs incorporating the arts have proven to be educational, developmentally rich, and cost effective ways to provide students the skills they need to be productive participants in today’s economy.”

The paper from the National Governors Association goes on to say that arts programs combine academic and workforce development skills in a manner attractive to people of all age groups and economic backgrounds. Children raised in higher socioeconomic communities are more often exposed to the arts through their families. In general, at-risk children lack the resources available to other children.

The beneficial and enriching effects of arts education on at-risk children are even more dramatic than on other children. For at-risk youth, that segment of society most likely to suffer from limited lifetime productivity, the arts contribute to lower recidivism rates; the acquisition of job skills; and the development of much needed creative thinking, problem solving, and communication skills.

Research reveals that when young people study the arts, they show heightened academic standing, a strong capacity for self-assessment, and a secure sense of their own ability to plan and work for a positive future. Arts education can enhance academic achievement for all students, reach students on the margins of the educational system, create an effective learning environment, and connect the learners’ experiences to the world outside of school.

Programs incorporating the arts have proven to be educational, developmentally rich, and cost effective ways to provide students the skills they need to be productive participants in today’s economy.



Model Arts Education Programs

changes for these students. The program helps young people devel-

The Center for the Arts of Manassas/ Prince William County: Hangin with the Bard

The Center for the Arts of Manassas/Prince William County, believing that intensive exposure to the arts has great potential to bring about positive changes in the lives of young people, inaugurated the Hangin

with the Bard program in

1998, targeting at risk

youth. The Center

operates the program

for the full school

year at the Prince

William County

Group Home for

Boys, the Group

Home for

Girls, and the

Juvenile Day

Reporting

Center. Dynamic

actors, storytellers,

and teachers

combine their

talents using

Shakespearean

theatre, storytelling,

and traditional

theatre techniques

as a backdrop

for providing

positive lifestyle

op self-expression and self-confidence and a greater understanding of the world and their own behavior. Integrated into the program are resources that assist the students with problem solving skills, appropriate behaviors, and conflict resolution. The Hangin with the Bard instructors work closely with school faculty to incorporate the Virginia Standards of Learning into the program.

The Richmond Ballet: Minds in Motion

The Minds in Motion program of the Richmond Ballet teaches fourth grade students lifelong values of self-discipline, self-

awareness, teamwork, and dedication through dance. Created in 1996, Minds in

Motion reaches 1,200

students in 13 elementary

schools in the Greater

Richmond area. It is an inte-

gral component of the fourth grade curriculum at the participating schools, most of which serve

underprivileged communities, and addresses the Virginia Standards of Learning for fourth grade

history, science, and social science. The students learn dance movements and choreography based

on historical and scientific themes. In 2003-2004 the Maggie Walker House and the Science

Museum of Virginia are partnering with the Minds in Motion program in developing a

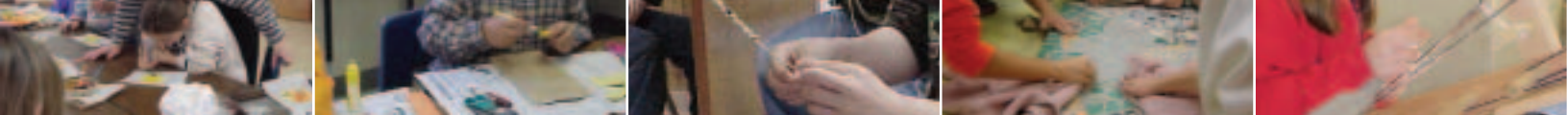
program that explores finance and the history of banking in Virginia.



Knowledge of the arts is part of a well-rounded education that benefits every child, whether the child grows up to be a scientist, an artist, or a basketball player.



VIRGINIANS FOR THE ARTS FOUNDATION



William King Regional Arts Center: VanGogh Outreach

The VanGogh Outreach program of the William King Regional Arts Center in Abingdon takes the art room directly into second grade public school classrooms. The program serves 4,000 students in 85 schools and 209 classrooms throughout southwest Virginia annually. Each student has four 90 minute sessions with certified art teachers who are employees of the William King Arts Center. The students study the ancient cultures of China, Egypt, and Native Americans, following the Virginia Standards of Learning, and create a piece of artwork based on one of these cultures. The VanGogh Outreach program was created to serve the eleven school divisions in southwest Virginia that cannot afford to hire art teachers for the elementary schools.

Classika Theatre: SS VETA

Classika Theatre, based in Arlington, created SS VETA (Social Studies: Virginia Education Through Arts) at the request of a principal of an Arlington County elementary school. The principal asked for an in-school programs to assist struggling students to achieve passing results on the Standards of Learning tests. SS VETA uses the dramatic arts to improve the students comprehension and retention

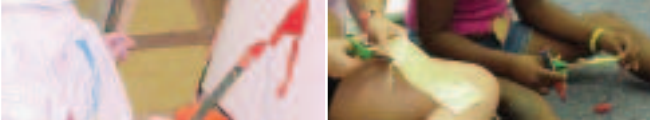
of academic material taught in the classroom. Forty fourth grade students were involved in the program for nine months. Prior to the implementation of SS VETA, the SOL test scores at the school had declined for three years, and the passing rate was only 31.9 percent. After the implementation of SS VETA, test scores at the school improved by 75%. Even more dramatic was the academic success achieved by the African-American students whose test scores increased by 200%. Based on the success of the pilot program, Classika is working with 500 students in 2003-2004.

The Art Museum of Western Virginia: Great Crates

The Great Crates program of the Art Museum of Western Virginia, based in Roanoke, is a multi-year cycle of changing exhibitions that address the fourth and fifth grade Standards of Learning in Virginia Studies, United States History, English, Visual Arts, and Mathematics. The current exhibition examines contemporary culture and the history of western Virginia since 1840 through the medium of photography. The exhibition components are a display of contemporary photographs by Virginia artists in a range of artistic styles; a selection of vintage photographs and cameras covering the history of photography and its uses; historic photographs paired with primary documents and SOL-connected activities exploring facets of everyday life as well as major trends in Virginia History; easy-to-use cameras for the students to



The arts provide effective learning opportunities that yield increased academic performance, reduced absenteeism, and better skill-building.



use to explore their own lives and their communities; and teacher study guides. The Museum sends these materials throughout its forty county service area.

The Virginia Opera

The Virginia Opera takes educational programs into schools across the state and performed last year for over 185,000 school children. *Oh, Freedom!* tells the story through song of the history of African-Americans from the era of slavery through the civil rights movement. Beginning with Zairean work songs and concluding with the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Oh, Freedom!* correlates to the Virginia Standards of Learning in history, geography, social studies, and science for grades 3 through 12. There are extensive printed resource materials and study guides sent to teachers in advance of each visit by the Virginia Opera cast to the schools. There is an interactive *Oh, Freedom!* section of the Virginia Opera website with detailed information about the historical periods covered in the performances. To date, *Oh, Freedom!* has been performed over 450 times in 300 locations to more than 125,000 students across the Commonwealth.

Arts education builds skills in problem-solving, in teamwork, and in self-discipline.

Virginia Artists and Arts Organizations Strengthen the Work of the Schools

- Nonprofit arts organizations provide learning opportunities for young people that enhance the work of teachers and the schools. Visiting artists in the classrooms give students insights into the lives of working professionals in the field and important role models.
- Of the 187 arts organizations that receive operating support from the Virginia Commission for the Arts in 2003-2004, 170 have programs for people under the age of 18. Half of these organizations have designed these programs to directly address the State Standards of Learning, not only in the arts, but also in language arts, science, and history.
- Programs sponsored by Virginia arts organizations include summer art, theatre, and music camps; performances and workshops in schools; internship opportunities; in-service workshops for teachers; long term artist residencies in schools; after-school classes; and opportunities for young people to perform or exhibit.

The educational programs of artists and nonprofit arts organizations do not take the place of ongoing arts instruction in the classroom by qualified teachers. As schools look for the resources for broadly based education, artists and arts organizations are an important asset, providing role models of working professionals and in-depth learning in the arts for students and teachers.





VIRGINIANS FOR THE ARTS FOUNDATION

One East Cary Street · Richmond, VA 23219

804/644-ARTS · FAX 804/783-0098 · E-mail: Mail@VaForArts.org

Visit us online at www.VaForArts.org

ArtWorks

for Virginia School Children

References

May 1, 2002, Issue Brief, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, The Impact of Arts Education on Workforce Preparation

Eloquent Evidence: Arts at the Core of Learning, Elizabeth Murfee, published by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium, National Endowment for the Arts and the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, distributed by the Education Department, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Education for the Workplace through the Arts, the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, published in Business Week, October 28, 1996